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processing negative else registration requests by storing
negative else registration request data in a second set associated
with said sender id of the client sending said request message; and
said method further comprising processing else messages by the following
steps for each respective one of said respective ones of said clients:

testing data of said else message for correspondence with
said positive else registration data of said respective one of said
clients;

testing data of said else message for correspondence with
said negative else registration data of said respective one of said
clients; and

sending said else message to said respective one of said
clients only if there is correspondence with said positive else
registration data of said respective one of said clients and there is
not correspondence with said negative else registration data of said
respective one of said clients.

2-22. (Cancelled)

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23. (New) A method of directing a message between a plurality of hosts, each host communicating to a router host, wherein the router host is adapted for routing messages;

said method comprising the steps of:

receiving the message from a first host, the first host being one of said plurality of hosts;

the message including fields, each field being further adapted for including one or more associated data items;

the method further comprising:

categorizing the message based on the fields in the message and processing the message based on the message category;

the processing step including:

identifying interest criteria for said first host from the fields in the message, the interest criteria indicating positive or negative interest relating to information to be forwarded to said first host and storing the positive and negative interest criteria for said first host; or

forwarding a message to those of said plurality of hosts for which information in the message matches information identified as positive interest criteria and for which information in the message does not match information identified as negative interest criteria.

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24. (New) The method of claim 23 wherein the fields include none or more of a response field and/or a request field;

the step of categorizing each message further comprises:

determining that the message is a response message if the message contains a response field;

determining that the message is a request message if the message contains a request field and does not contain a response field; and

determining that the message is an else message if the message does not contain either a response field or a request field.

25. (New) The method of claim 24 wherein the message is a request message, the request message being an else-registration-positive request message or an else-registration-negative request message, wherein:

the else-registration-positive request message is indicative of messages the first host wants to receive; and

the else-registration-negative request message is indicative of messages the first host does not want to receive.

26. (New) The method of claim 25 wherein the message is an else-registration-positive request message, the interest criteria field contains a field-list field and/or previously undefined fields, and the step of processing the message

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further comprises:

analyzing the field-list field, the previously undefined fields and associated data items for each previously undefined field;

sending a response to the first host; and

generating or updating a table of wanted else message criteria for the first host with the results of the analysis of the field-list field and of the previously undefined fields and the associated data items.

27. (New) The method of claim 25 wherein the message is an else-registration-negative request message, the interest criteria field contains a field-list field and/or previously undefined fields, and the step of processing the message further comprises:

analyzing the field-list field, the previously undefined fields and associated data items for each field;

sending a response to the first host; and

generating or updating a table of unwanted else message criteria for the first host with the results of the analysis of the field-list field and of the previously undefined fields and the associated data items.

28. (New) The method of claim 24 wherein the message is an else message, the router includes a table of wanted else message criteria and a table of unwanted

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else message criteria for each host, and the step of processing the else message further comprises:

for each host, comparing the contents of the fields of the else message with the contents of the wanted else message criteria table for the host and determining if the else message is a wanted else message; and

if the else message is a wanted else message for the host, then comparing the contents of the fields of the else message with the contents of the unwanted else message criteria table for the host and determining if the else message is an unwanted else message; and

forwarding the else message to the host if the message is a wanted else message and is not an unwanted else message for the host.

29. (New) The method of Claim 23 wherein said one or more of said plurality of hosts is a router host.